

How eyes in the sky help fishermen net fish in the sea

TNN | Jan 7, 2015, 05:43AM IST

g+1 4

MUMBAI: Why should a 'poor country' like India spend crores of rupees on a satellite launch? The fishermen from Colaba, or anywhere along the country's 7,000km coastline, could have the answer.

Satellite applications are netting a big catch, literally, for lakhs of fishermen across the country, as images and data from space provide vital information on fish density, said T Srinivas Kumar at the 102nd Indian Science Congress on Monday. Kumar is a scientist at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad.



Why should a 'poor country' like India spend crores of rupees on a satellite launch? The fishermen from Colaba, or anywhere along the country's 7,000km coastline, could have the answer.

Indian satellites, especially those like Cartosat and Oceansat, serve as eyes in the sky to guide fishermen. "Our satellites provide high-resolution pictures that show chlorophyll content and other patterns that are indicators of fish density. They also provide information to ensure our fishermen remain safe in the waters," said Kumar.

"Studies show that a fisherman who went to sea in the direction satellite images guided earned Rs1.2 lakh as against another who earned Rs70,000 by sailing randomly," he said. About 1.2 million fishermen in India have already started benefiting out of satellite imaging, as some 2.5 lakh boats are cashing in on the opportunity.

And it's not just the catch - accurate information avoids aimless wandering by boats that guzzle diesel. "A study in Raigad showed boats saved 70,000 litres of diesel a month by following satellite imagery," the scientist said.

Satellites also help read wave patterns to warn fishermen against venturing into dangerous zones. "Waves that reach a height of more than 3 metres spell danger," said Srinivas. So these satellites let us tell fishermen not just where to go but also when to go," he said.

Satellite imagery can be a great tool for studying environmental degradation and devising preventive steps too. Coral bleaching and the resultant rise in sea surface temperature are accurately profiled by satellites.

Stay updated on the go with Times of India News App. Click [here](#) to download it for your device.